

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 464

By Travis

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor Minnie Lee Deakins for her expertise in the art of quilting.

WHEREAS, it is the privilege of the members of this General Assembly to recognize those estimable individuals who continue Tennessee's folk art traditions through dedication to their craft, as well as teaching younger generations to appreciate and participate in folk art in its various forms; and

WHEREAS, one such individual is Minnie Lee Deakins of Dunlap, a quilter with nearly nine decades of experience; she not only keeps the tradition alive by producing her own work but also by generously giving of her time and talents to mentor new generations of quilters; and

WHEREAS, born on April 21, 1924, in Wilson County, Minnie Lee was the youngest of five girls; her father's untimely passing, which occurred when she was only two years old, led her immediate family to move in with Minnie Lee's maternal grandparents; and

WHEREAS, while her older sisters were at school, Minnie Lee Deakins spent time with her grandmother, the oldest woman in the community at the time; many of the women in the community visited her grandmother's house weekly to quilt, and in this environment, Minnie Lee learned to quilt even before she started school by utilizing the small pieces left over after the women had cut out their quilts; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Deakins has many fond memories of her grandmother, who hand-pieced quilts. Her mother was a quilter, as well, and used a treadle sewing machine to piece her quilts; when Minnie Lee was eight years old, she used the treadle machine to piece a four-patch quilt her mother had quilted for her; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Deakins was the first special education teacher in Sequatchie County, devoting many years to her students and eventually retiring from the profession; upon

retirement, she parlayed her abilities as an educator into teaching quilting. She has conducted classes and demonstrations for the local Extension Homemakers/Family and has often given presentations on quilting to groups such as the Antebellum Academy at Oaklands Mansion in Murfreesboro; and

WHEREAS, in 1983, after seeing Nancy Donahue's booth at the National Quilt Show in Bell Buckle, Minnie Lee Deakins became interested in miniature quilts; she often uses miniatures for examples in her quilting classes, and during the past two years, her miniature quilts have been displayed at Oaklands Mansion and the Morrison Public Library; and

WHEREAS, over the years, Mrs. Deakins has won various awards for her quilting; in 2015, at the age of ninety-one, she won nine blue ribbons at the Sequatchie County Fair; and

WHEREAS, well-known throughout her community for her fine quilting work, Minnie Lee Deakins contributed several quilt blocks for Sequatchie County's Homecoming '86 Quilt, which was made by the Extension Homemakers and still hangs in the county courthouse; she also chaired University of Tennessee Extension's Quilting on the Mountain seminar for over twenty years, an event she still enjoys attending annually; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Deakins has been active in her community in other capacities as well; over the years, she has served as a Cub Scout den mother, 4-H Club leader, tutor, and caregiver for elderly relatives; and

WHEREAS, in addition to being a master quilter, Minnie Lee Deakins is a beloved wife and mother; she enjoys the love and companionship of her dear husband of seventy-two years, World War II Veteran Avery Deakins; they are the proud parents of three sons and one daughter and are delighted to be grandparents, great-grandparents, and great-great-grandparents; and

WHEREAS, a woman of devout faith, Mrs. Deakins, along with her husband, has been active in her local congregation; many of the Deakinses' summers included a week of working at the Church of Christ youth camp; and

WHEREAS, Minnie Lee Deakins has long been a steadfast steward of Tennessee's cultural heritage, and it is fitting that she be recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we recognize and honor Minnie Lee Deakins for her mastery in the folk art of quilting, extending our sincere gratitude for all she has done to preserve and perpetuate the craft and wishing her all the best in the years to come.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.